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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/525,527	02/24/2005	Takehiro Matsuda	041465-5255	7034

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, LINH THI

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2627

DATE MAILED: 04/21/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/525,527	Applicant(s) MATSUDA, TAKEHIRO	
	Examiner Linh T. Nguyen	Art Unit 2627	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 February 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 February 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-7 are rejected because the phrase "at least one" covers more than one occurrence, therefore, the term "at least one concave or concaves" is redundant.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable by Takanori (JP Publication number 2002025094).

In regards to claims 1, 3 and 5, Takanori discloses an optical disc reproducing apparatus (Fig. 1) comprising: an objective lens (Fig. 5, element 4) equipped with a ring-shaped lens protecting part (Fig. 5, element 43) arranged opposite an optical disc (Fig. 1, element 5, opposite side of the disk is touching element 43) and protruding toward said optical disc (Fig. 7, element 43 is protruding to the optical disk 5), and a reproducing device for reading out data optically recorded on said optical disc via said objective lens (Fig. 5), wherein: at least one concave portion (Fig. 7, element 4 is

concave) for establishing communication between the inside and the outside of said ring (Fig. 7, element 43) is formed in said lens protecting part (Fig. 7).

In regards to claims 2, 4 and 6, Takanori discloses the optical disc reproducing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said at least one concave portion of said lens protecting part (Fig. 5 element 43) is disposed in a direction tangential to said optical disc and orthogonal to the tracking direction so as to bisect the face of said lens protecting part opposite said optical disc (Fig. 5).

In regards to claim 7, Takanori discloses an optical disc reproducing method for reading out data optically recorded on an optical disc via an objective lens provided with a ring-shaped lens protecting part (Fig. 5, element 43) opposite said optical disc and protruding toward said optical disc (Fig. 7, element 43), wherein: at least one concave for establishing communication between the inside and the outside of said the ring is or are formed in said lens protecting part (Fig. 7, element 43a-b), and the pressures inside and outside the ring are equalized to prevent the optical disc and said objective lens from coming into contact with each other (Column 5, lines 28-36).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Linh T. Nguyen whose telephone number is 571-272-5513. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30am-5:00pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, A. Wellington can be reached on 571-272-4483. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

LN
April 10, 2006


ANDREA WELLINGTON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER